

## First Pony Express in Utah Built Near Coalville

(Submitted by Colleen Dickson)

The first pony express station in Utah was built about five miles north of Coalville at the mouth of Echo Canyon. Construction of these stations began almost ten years before the express was organized. Work on the Echo Canyon station, known as the Weber Stage and Pony Express Station, began in 1835 and the service began in 1860.

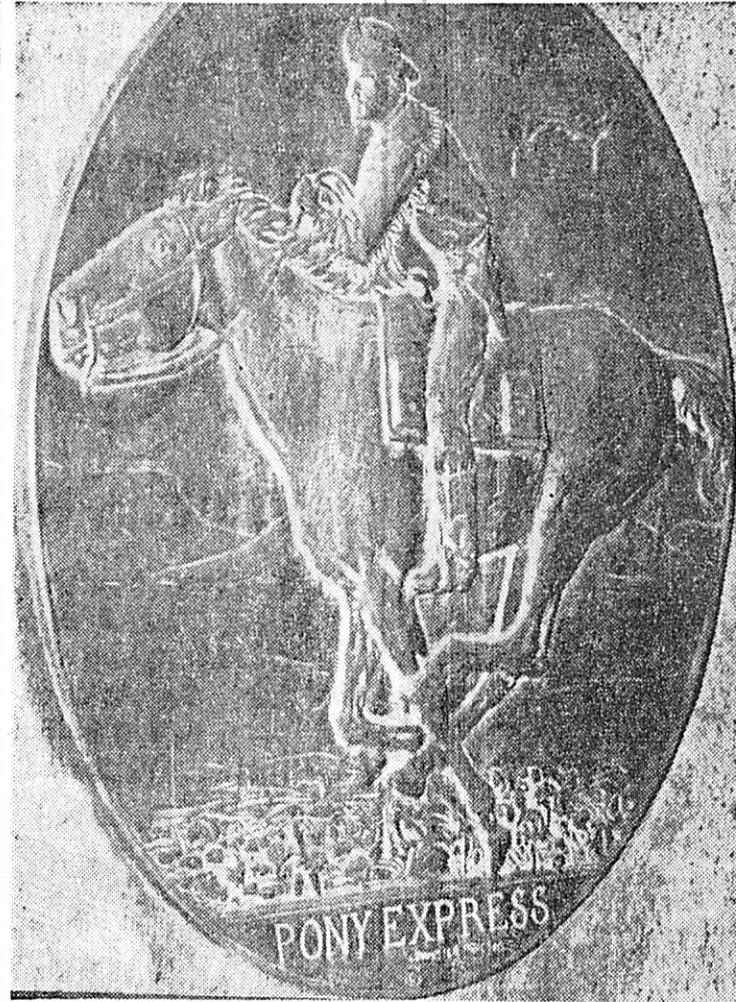
The route was from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento, Calif., with stations conveniently spaced between. Horses were changed at these stations, and the riders sometimes had to pass the ruins of smoldering stations because Indians had been there first.

These stations were not exactly built for comfort, though for their time they had a number of luxuries such as tallow candles, oiled paper windows and

solid dirt roofs. Of course when it rained the roof would be washed away in spots, but the stations served a good purpose.

Besides a stopping place for the express riders, a shelter for the hostlers and a supply depot, they often served as dance halls, churches, schools and hospitals. The one in Echo Canyon even served as a service station for the modern automobile in later years.

The first pony express rider left Sacramento, April 3, 1860, and the first rider from St. Joseph left on the same day. The rider from the west arrived in Salt Lake City at 11:45 p.m. April 7, having traveled the last 75 miles in five hours and 15 minutes. From St. Joseph the rider arrived at 6:25 p.m. April 9.



**PONY EXPRESS STATION**—This marker marks the site of the Great Salt Lake City station of the pony express. It is an official marker of the Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Assn. It stands on Main Street south of First South.

# Pony Express Starlec

74 Years Ago To  
 First Run Was Made From Sacramento to S.  
 In Four Days; Line Lost \$150,000

Seveny-four years ago today, a buckskin-  
 spurred his pony eastward at a mad gallop. Strapp  
 saddle was valuable mail from Sacramento, Calif., de  
 eastern cities. Four days later that mail reached Salt L  
 Grows were gathered in the streets as the foam-ric  
 three mud from his flying heels. Mail beat into the ric  
 At the stage depot a fresh pony and a fresh rider wen  
 In less than ten seconds the saddle bags with their prec  
 of mail were transferred and the ride continued eastw

That was the start of the Pony  
 Express and an epochal event for  
 Salt Lake and the west. It brought  
 this city within six days of the  
 eastern frontier and within seven  
 days' communication with Wash-  
 ington, D. C. Previously the time  
 was about three months.  
 Complaint of Delays  
 New messengers flash over the  
 same route in a fraction of a se-  
 cond and the trail is covered by air-  
 plane daily in a few hours.  
 In the '60's and '60's there were  
 many complaints on the overland  
 mail delays. First class mail of-  
 ten was left waiting at Fort Kear-  
 ney or other points for months  
 at a time. In many cases govern-  
 ment reports were submitted for  
 first class mail and caused furth-  
 er delays. Stage coach passengers  
 likewise complained of the dis-  
 comfort of riding with the inter-  
 ior of the coaches packed with  
 useless government tomes.  
 Horace Greeley raised a particu-  
 larly strident wail when he was  
 forced to ride from Fort Laramie  
 on a tripod formed by the corners  
 of one patent office report and two  
 of Hon. J. M. Bernhett's free  
 public documents.  
 Then, also, California was be-  
 coming predominant in the na-  
 tion's interest with immigration  
 and gold. The officials in Wash-  
 ington wanted faster communica-  
 tion and so the Pony Express  
 started on April 3, 1860.  
 Lost \$150,000  
 The company of Russell, Wad-  
 sell and Majors supplied the back-  
 ing and provided horses and rid-  
 ers. Mail was carried for \$5 an  
 ounce from Sacramento to St.  
 Joseph, Mo.  
 Horses were changed every 15  
 or 16 miles and always were rid-  
 den at a gallop. Bandits and in-  
 dians frequently waylaid the rid-  
 ers but like our mail riders of to-  
 day they had the same motto: "The  
 mail must go through."  
 The Civil war and the need  
 for still faster communication  
 brought the telegraph into the  
 west and the Pony Express pass-  
 ed into the discard but in the 18  
 month of its existence it cost the  
 backers the loss of \$150,000.  
 In the April 11, 1860, edition of  
 The Deseret News is an account  
 of the first Pony Express ride  
 through this section.  
 "The first Pony Express from  
 Salt Lake left Sacramento City,  
 Cal., at 12 p.m. on the night of  
 the 3rd inst., and arrived in this  
 city at 11:45 p.m. of the 7th. Indi-  
 cations of prospectus time," the account  
 reads. "The roads were heavy and  
 the weather stormy. The last 15  
 miles was made in 6 hours, 16  
 minutes in a heavy rain."  
 The Express from the east left  
 St. Joseph at 6:30 p.m., April 5,  
 and arrived in Salt Lake City at  
 6:25 p.m., April 9.  
 "Although a telegraph is very  
 desirable," the account continues,  
 "it will not be built until the  
 winter of 1861."

Ford..	122	94	72	Nesome	156	151	15
Stauler	142	138	164	Dummy	115	116	13
Johnson	143	117	146	Allen...	129	152	16
A. Johnson	110	101	104	Eshen	124	141	14
Fox...	147	181	158	Dummy	...	126	12
Handep	33	33	33	Handep	6	...	...
Totals	697	724	781	Totals	531	718	72